

## Concept of Peace in Islam: A Study of Contributions of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan to Peaceful Coexistence

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### Abstract

*Peace has been a long cherished dream of humanity since times immemorial; but its relevance and scope in the modern world has increased manifolds. The term "peace" has innumerable connotations. The oldest understanding of peace is that synonymous to equilibrium and stability. Peace is the greatest concern of man; all religions attach much importance to it. But Islam's concept of peace needs to be studied in more detail as, in the present times; violence is mostly spoken of with reference to Islam. The primary texts of Islam; the Holy Quran and the Hadith of Prophet (PBUH); are replete with instructions and exhortations for peace.*

*An escalation of violence in recent years and its attribution to Islam in the name of Jihad has drawn attention of religious scholars all over the world. Many western and Muslims scholars have taken to study of primary Islamic texts afresh, to make an analysis to sift facts from fiction and suggest remedies for this malaise.*

*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b. 1925) is a noted Islamic scholar, scholastic theologian, philosopher and peace activist. He has developed his own, in some ways unique, understanding of Islam and its place in the modern world. Having made significant contributions to the cause of Islam particularly in form of his scientific theology and response to modern challenges, he for the past few decades has focused his efforts on Spirituality, Peace and Dialogue with other communities. This paper, tries to analyze with scientific objectivity, his perspective of peace in Islam and the ways and means for achieving this goal. The paper concludes with the argument that taken in right perspective, the recommendations made by Maulana are both practicable and result oriented making it possible for Muslims to reap the dividends of peace with patience and wisdom.*

**Key words:** Islam, jihad, Maulana, Peace, Religion

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## Introduction

Islam is the youngest revealed religion of the word. It is in fact not a new religion, but a revised and enlarged edition of eternal Divine religion based on Unity of God (*Tauheed*), medium of Prophets (*Risalah*) and the concept of After-life (*Akhirah*). Islam shares these three fundamentals with the other living Abrahamic faiths i.e. Judaism and Christianity. This is explicit from the *Quranic* text itself as:

*“The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah—that which We have sent by inspiration to thee—and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus.”<sup>1</sup>*

The relationship between religion and peace in general is quite controversial. Some scholars, such as Asghar Ali Engineer, argue that Islam as a religion is all peace and does not allow for violence. On a wider scale, Engineer generally rejects drawing any integral relationship between any religion, including Islam, and violence. Rather, he sees violence as a social phenomenon that takes place as a result of certain negative conditions in specific societies where religion may be manipulated as a result. What a religion teaches can, therefore, be different from how its followers hold it to be in practice, due to the influence of “self-justifying groups” such as religious or political institutions or cultural traits.<sup>2</sup>

The very word Islam (from the Arabic *silm*) connotes peace. One of the attributes of Allah described in the Quran is ‘As salaam’, which means peace and security. In the Quran, divine guidance is likened to the path of peace.<sup>3</sup>

According to Islam, paradise is the ideal human abode, and is thus called ‘home of peace’. It is also mentioned that people of paradise will greet each other with the word, ‘salaam’ (peace).<sup>4</sup>

When the Messenger of God (PBUH) explained Islam’s potential to contribute to safety and peace in society, he specified one goal in his time as the following:

*“A rider will travel from Sana'a (in Yemen) to Hadhramaut (a region in the southwest of the Arabian Peninsula) fearing none but God, and will not fear a wolf as regards his sheep.”<sup>5</sup>*

The root of the word Islam, *Silm*, refers to "making peace, being in a mutually peaceful environment, greetings, rescue, safety, being secure, finding peace, reaching salvation and well being or being far from danger, attaining goodness, comfort and favor, keeping away from troubles and disasters, submitting the self and obeying, respect, being far from wrong.

Though Islam promises the ideal world of peace only in the hereafter; the efforts for establishing order in the human world carries great reward in the next world irrespective of the outcome of these efforts in this world. The Islamic concept of peace encompasses whole range of human sphere may it be political, social, family or personal life. Peaces being the greatest concern of man, all religions attach much importance to it. But Islam's concept of peace needs to be studied in more detail as, in the present times; violence is mostly spoken of with reference to Islam.

### **Concept of Peace in Quran and Hadith**

There are many verses in the Qur'an that prefer peace to war and forgiveness to hatred.<sup>6</sup> This is evidenced by the fact that only some 60 verses out of 6,666 verses in the Qur'an deal with the rules of war and armed jihad(0.6%), while the rest deal with faith and moral issues.

Islamic primary texts the Holy Quran and the *Hadith* of Prophet (PBUH) are replete with instructions and exhortations for peace. Let's have a look at few *Ayahs* from the Quran:

"Allah calls to the home of peace".<sup>7</sup>

"Do not by your oaths make Allah a hindrance to your being righteous and observing your duty to Him and making peace among mankind."<sup>8</sup>

"Disturb not the peace of the earth after the fair ordering thereof by God"<sup>9</sup>

"Do no mischief on earth"<sup>10</sup>

"Killing one human being is akin to killing all of mankind".<sup>11</sup>

Now let's turn to precedence from the Sunnah of Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH):

The prophet of Islam (PBUH) was a man of peace and reconciliation. He urged his companions to ask God for peace. For the prophet's main task was the communication of divine message to the people and an atmosphere of peace and good will was essential to perform this duty.

“God grants to peace what he doesn’t grant to violence”<sup>12</sup>

“A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands people are safe.”<sup>13</sup>

“Do good to those who harm you”<sup>14</sup>

“One, who betrays, harms, or deceives a Muslim, is not of us.”<sup>15</sup>

He describes the ideal Muslim as thus:

“A Muslim is one from whose hand and tongue people are safe. A believer is one from whom people know that their wealth and lives are safe.”<sup>16</sup>

It becomes thus amply clear that Islam is primarily a religion of peace having nothing to do with violence. Or the violence prevalent in the contemporary world has no sanction from the Quran or the life of prophet of Islam.

### **Jihad in Islam and War Ethics**

The word jihad is derived from the Arabic ‘*Juhd*’ which actually means to struggle, to strive, to exert oneself to the utmost to achieve one’s goal. Therefore, in the Islamic sense, Jihad means to struggle or strive in the way of God.<sup>17</sup>

Al-Farabi (874-950), a renowned Muslim philosopher, maintained a clear distinction between “war” and “jihad” in his writings. War is only one form of jihad, which refers to military action. The true essence of jihad for al-Farabi is the internal struggle within one’s soul between the forces of reason, on the one hand, and one’s desires on the other, with the aim of the first to control or moderate the second so that virtue may prevail.<sup>18</sup> More important is that the jihad for justice is grounded on the moral concept of responsibility to Allah.

Like other major religions of the world, Islam does have a place for this minor jihad or the armed struggle, but its scope and indications carry certain riders before embarking on such an important campaign. Granting permission for Jihad the Quran clearly indicates its purpose:

“Permission is granted to those who are fighting because they have been oppressed...those who have been expelled from their homes without any just cause...”<sup>19</sup>

“And what is the matter with you that you do not fight in the way of God for [the sake of] the oppressed men, women, and children who pray: ‘Our Lord, take us out of this town whose people are oppressors, and appoint for us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper...’”<sup>20</sup>

“Fight in the way of God those who are fighting against you; and do not exceed (the limits). Verily Allah does not love those who exceed (the limits)”<sup>21</sup>

“Prepare against them (i.e., the enemy) with whatever force and trained horses you can in order to frighten thereby Allah’s enemy, your enemy, and others besides them who you do not know but Allah knows them.”<sup>22</sup>

“Whoever meets Allah not associating anything in worship with him, and not having shed any blood unlawfully, will enter Paradise”<sup>23</sup>

We can infer from these verses that Islam allows armed struggle in certain situations with specific aims and proper discipline. E.g. Oppression (22:39, 4:75) & religious persecution (22:39-40); consolidation of military might to frighten the enemy; (8:60) and self defense. (2:190). A focused study of the minor wars in early phase of Islam reveals that almost each one of these falls under a specific category.

Further there are rules to be followed by armed men, even during jihad differentiating it from the indiscriminate use of violence. Islam teaches that Muslims should be strong in order to defend themselves, but that does not mean they have to become aggressive and unjust. Few points in these War Ethics are as:

Islam is the religion of peace. It, therefore enjoins peace. It enjoins peace even in war when the enemy is inclined to peace.<sup>24</sup>

“If the enemy is inclined towards peace you should also incline towards peace and trust in God.”<sup>25</sup>

The truth is that Islam in the full sense is a religion of peace. In no way it is a religion of war. In Islam peace is the rule and war is only a rare exception. Further any stray acts of aggression are not enough for Muslims to rush into war.<sup>26</sup>

Some writers and speakers quote the Quranic verses out of context and try to blame Islam for promoting violence and terrorism. They take a “text” and use it outside its “context”. E.g. they quote only the highlighted part of a verse to malign Islam as a violent and tyrant religion:

“And fight in the way of God those who are fighting against you, and do not exceed the limits, surely God does not love those who exceed the limits. **And kill them wherever you find them**, and drive them out from whence they drove you out—persecution is severer than slaughter.”<sup>27</sup>

The context clarifies that the Quranic verses 2:191 & 9:36, are allowing Muslims of Madina to defend themselves against the aggression of the unbelievers of Makkah. It surely does not say that Muslims should go around the world killing any infidel or the polytheists that they find. The context clearly gives the right of defense to the Muslim but, in no way, does it promote aggression.

Just because the term “Jihad” is misused by some Muslims for their political agenda, Muslims don’t have to abandon this noble concept of their faith. Many Muslims describe only the major (spiritual) jihad and shy away from the jihad in the sense of armed struggle for defense. As Muslims, we stand by our teachings and don’t need to apologize for it even if some misguided souls hijack the terms of faith for their own political ends.<sup>28</sup>

It is quite clear that Islam is not talking about the jihad for the sake of aggression; rather it is allowing the Muslims to physically defend their lives, properties, and lands against any aggression, and also to fight for ending tyranny against the oppressed men, women and children. It may be of interest to many that like concept of just war, *Jihad* or *Dharm yudh* the United Nation's Charter does explicitly discuss legitimacy of resisting or fighting aggression.

### Maulana Wahiduddin on Peace

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (Born January 1, 1925) is a noted Indian Islamic scholar, scholastic theologian, philosopher and peace activist. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has made it his mission to present Islamic teachings in the style and language of the post scientific era. Rediscovering Islam from its original sources, he has authored over 200 books on Islam including “*Prophetic wisdom*”, “*Islam Rediscovered*”, *Islam and Peace*, *The Prophet of Peace* etc. He has received many national and international awards in recognition of his contribution to world peace. Some

of the other awards presented to him are the Demiurgus Peace International Award, the Padam Bhushan, the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavna Award, the National Integration Award, the Communal Harmony Award, the National Amity Award, the Dilli Gaurav Award, the Urdu Academy Award, and the National Citizen's Award, presented by Mother Teresa. He has also been awarded the title of Ambassador of Peace by the International Federation for World Peace, Korea.

From his early years, he showed a voracious appetite for modern knowledge, spending entire days in the library. He remained associated with Maulana Maududi's Jamat-i-Islami for about 15 years till 1962. Khan was particularly concerned with developing an understanding of Islam that would appeal to the modern mind while at the same time remaining firmly grounded in the original sources of Islam.<sup>29</sup>

Disillusioned with what he calls the 'political oriented religion' of the Jama'at, Maulana parted his ways with Jamaat-i-Islami and was now attracted to what he saw as the 'God-oriented religion' preached by another Islamic revivalist movement, the Tablighi Jamaat, but finding the environment not conducive for intellectual growth he started his own independent institution Islami Markaz in 1970. As a prolific writer he went on to present Islamic teachings in the style and language of the present day.

Subsequently, the organ of the Centre, Al-Risala – the monthly magazine – was launched in Urdu in 1976. This journal, consisting entirely of his own articles, has done much to make people understand the peaceful face of Islam.

### **Centre for Peace and Spirituality International**

To spread spiritual wisdom based on peace to mankind across the globe, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan established CPS International, i.e. Centre for Peace and Spirituality in January 2001. As is apparent from its name, the organization aims to promote and reinforce the culture of peace through mind-based spirituality. The goal of CPS is to bring about an intellectual revolution in the individuals and reveal their true, positive personalities so that they become peaceful members of society. Maulana believes that when individuals such as these are collected in sufficient numbers, it results in a peaceful society. The sphere of action of CPS International is global.

Maulana, throughout his literary carrier has endeavored to present Islam before the modern world in the scientific and objective perspective. Educated youth all over the world have widely benefitted from his ideas and writings. Maulana is particularly concerned with developing an understanding of Islam that would appeal to the modern mind while at the same time remaining firmly grounded in the original sources of Islam. He recommends rediscovery of Islam from Holy Quran and Prophet's Sunnah in the light of contemporary Scientific and technical knowledge. He firmly believes, argues and proves that Science and religion are compatible with each other and science, rather, helps in explaining many obscurities imbedded in interpretations by earlier scholars. Having made significant contributions to the cause of Islam in the modern world, particularly his scientific theology and response to modern challenges, he, for the past few decades has focused his efforts on spirituality, Aakhirat oriented life, & peace and dialogue with other communities.

While reinterpreting Islam Maulana has endeavored to re-fix the priorities in Islam, suggesting an *Aakhirat Oriented Life* for all Muslims and making Islamic *Dawah* as basic Prophetic mission for every Muslim. Since peaceful environment is a must for Islamic *Dawah*, Maulana argues that creating such an environment is primarily a responsibility of Muslims all over the world. Maulana propounds a scientific and ideological interpretation of Islam and recommends a concept of 'Peaceful Jihad' and need for interfaith dialogue, time and again referring to contemporary relevance of Hudaibiya pact. The Hudabiyah treaty is infact the bedrock on which Maulana builds the whole edifice of Peace.

### **Maulana's Books on Peace**

- *The True Jihad*
- *Islam and Peace*
- *The ideology of Peace*
- *The Prophet of Peace: Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad*
- *Jihad, Peace & Inter-community Relations in Islam*
- *Islam Rediscovered*
- *A Manifesto of Peace*
- *Islam: Creator of the Modern Age*
- *Indian Muslims*

- *Building a strong and prosperous India and Role of Muslims*
- *Hal Yahan Hai ( Here lies the solution)*
- *Islam and World Peace*

### **Peace in Islam According to Maulana**

Peace according to Maulana is the greatest good or *summum bonum* which is an end itself and at the same time contains all other goods and no negative results. Most people hold that freedom is the greatest good but that can't be so described. The unchecked freedom leads to anarchy, with all its attendant problems. Peace brings normalcy. That is the best thing about it, for all developments and progress can take place only in a normal atmosphere. Maulana talking about his mission writes:

“I want to re-engineer the minds of those who think in terms of violence. They must realize that it is entirely possible to successfully achieve by peaceful means what they are unable to achieve by violent means.”<sup>30</sup>

### **Peace for justice and violence for justice**

The constitution of international labor organization affirms that,

“Universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based on social justice”

But this assumption is unrealistic according to Maulana. Peace is not desirable for the sake of justice but for the sake of normalcy. Setting justice as a precondition for peace is unnatural according to Maulana. The correct approach he suggests is first of all to establish peace on a unilateral basis. The fact is that in this world one can have only a working justice but not the ideal justice. Working justice is possible in all situations whereas ideal justice is not. Maulana concludes that peace can be achieved by the acceptance of *status quo* or *qana'at* in Islamic terms. Through peace the opportunities open up and it is by availing these opportunities that justice can be achieved.

According to the law of nature peace can be attained only on a unilateral basis, without confrontation with others. One example of this peace strategy is *Hudaibya* treaty entered into by

prophet of Islam in 628ce. This entailed the prophet having to agree to all of the conditions laid down by his opponents. That has a universal and eternal relevance.<sup>31</sup>

The peace can be attained only on a unilateral basis, without confrontation with others. But when we want to establish social justice and human rights, it becomes a bilateral issue because we have to fight other groups that we think are responsible for injustice and violation of human rights. Therefore peace for social justice is not a practicable formula. The only workable formula is peace for normalcy. Normalcy gives us the opportunity to achieve over goal through wise planning.

### **Maulana on peaceful Jihad**

Maulana takes the term jihad in literal meaning of struggle for spreading the divine message to the remotest corner of the word. He argues that it is just possible to achieve this goal utilizing the modern advancements in the field of science and technology. According to Maulana when the modern developments in information and communication have turned the vast world into a global village, nothing should prevent Muslims from spreading the word of God which is obligatory on them being *khair ul ummah*, after the *khatm e nabuwwat*. Having lost their political empires they are still in a position to establish a *Dawah* empire in the modern world; argues Maulana. And there is a reason to believe that based on his vast knowledge, experience and analysis of contemporary world view, Maulana concludes that presently humanity is experiencing an ideological vacuum that can only be filled by Islam. The man made ideologies and –isms like materialism, Marxism, socialism and communism have all been rejected with the passage of time while it is only Islam that stands the test of history.

The Jihad in terms of war or war tactics forms one of the major obligatory duties on Muslim *ummah* with precedence in the early period of Islam and unequivocal predictions of its lasting value till the Day of Judgment. It also finds favor with traditional *Ulama* and political ideologues many of whom exploit it for political gains rather than upholding and propagating the word of Allah. Maulana points out a subtle distinction and clarifies that ultimate aim of Islam is to spread the word of God (*Izhar-i-Din*) and not as *Iqamat-i-Din* or establishment of political empire as being attempted unsuccessfully throughout the world for past many centuries.<sup>32</sup>

Whereas Maulana debates the place and relevance of armed struggle in present world full of opportunities for *Dawah* work; his opponents blame him for pacifist preaching and blunting the martial acumen of Muslim youth.

### **Maulana on violence and terrorism in Islam**

According to Maulana, Muslims all over the world are said to be engaged in violence whether active or passive. Just thinking in extremist terms may be described as passive violence while adopting the gun culture may be described active violence. This phenomenon pertains to Muslim practices and has nothing to do with Islamic teachings. Jihad literally means ‘utmost struggle’. The true interpretation of this word is ‘a peaceful struggle for the dissemination of the message of God to mankind.’

But the problem has assumed enormous volume through its association with Islam, in the name of jihad. Those engaged in violent acts have adopted it as an ideology through sanction from some ideologues who justify it for establishment of divine rule. Today the armament industry is one of the most flourishing enterprises in the world. But this problem can't be tackled through use of superior or more deadly weapons. In fact it needs a counter-ideology. They legitimize their actions through wrong interpretations of the religious scriptures. We have to delegitimize it by replacing it with right interpretation and giving them a peaceful alternative. No other strategy will work.<sup>33</sup>

Modern terrorism in the name of Islam is based entirely on misinterpretation of Islamic texts. It can be eradicated only by a right interpretation of the text being universally publicized. Giving a correct picture of Islam is undoubtedly the greatest need in the contemporary world. It is better to have recourse to education than to guns if present day terrorism is to be countered.<sup>34</sup>

Violence is absolutely not an option for Muslims, nor should struggle to achieve political gain be their goal. Muslims have only one choice before them that is to engage in peaceful *Dawah* work to gain God's favor as promised in the Quran:

‘God will surely help him who helps his cause-God is indeed powerful and mighty.’<sup>35</sup>

Muslims should therefore stop dichotomous thinking in terms of *Darul Islam* and *Darul Harb* keeping in mind the possibility of a *Darul Dawah*.

There has always been a discrepancy between essence and manifestations of all religions and the symptom is probably not going to disappear in near future. Though the phenomenon is not unique to Islam, it, in recent times has been bracketed with Islam by world media, for some vested interests. Of course the misinterpretation of Islam and ignorance of the Muslim youth is another important factor. It calls for a clear distinction between principles of Islam and the practices of Muslims and judging the latter by former and not vice versa.

On the concept of peace, Tolerance and non violence in Islam, Maulana, Summarize his view point as:

It is no exaggeration to say that Islam and violence are contradictory to each other. The concept of Islamic violence is so unfounded that *prima facie* it stands rejected. The fact that violence is not sustainable in the present world is sufficient indication that violence as a principle is quite alien to the scheme of things in Islam. Islam claims to be an eternal religion and as such, could not uphold any principle which could not stand up to the test of time. Any attempt to bracket violence with Islam amounts, therefore, to casting doubt upon the very eternity of the Islam. Islamic terrorism is a contradiction in terms, much like ‘pacifist’ activism. And the truth of the fact is that, all the teachings of Islam are based directly or indirectly on the principle of Peace.<sup>36</sup>

### **Islam and west**

According to a Sahih al-Bukhari the prophet of Islam (PBUH) once observed: God will strengthen this religion through the wicked as well as good.<sup>37</sup>

If we could extricate ourselves from the rigid pattern of dichotomous thought, we would find that western civilization was neither friendly nor hostile to Islam, but rather-in the words of Hadith-a potential supporter of Islam.

It is undisputable fact that many political and economic policies of west are detrimental to the collective good of Muslims; but in reality this has nothing to do with any enmity towards Islam. According to Maulana the Hadith which mentions Dajjal appearing close to doomsday is doubtless correct but certainly it doesn’t apply to modern western civilization.

Another Hadith of the prophet predicts that close to the doomsday the message of Islam will enter every hut or mansion (*Idkhal-i-kalima*). This in fact has been made possible in the modern world, truly speaking only with the help of west.<sup>38</sup>

The pre-conditions for *Idkhal-i-kalmia* include a system of global communication, complete religious freedom, unbounded resources, free enquiry into knowledge including religious, and all these factors are now a reality –thanks to the west. It has thus produced all the means and resources essential to the successful carrying out of Islamic *Dawah*, all over the world. Further it is west that scientifically unraveled the nature's secrets, testifying to the veracity of the Quran:

“We will show them our signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth”<sup>39</sup>

### **Dawah the Contemporary Counterpart of Jihad**

Drawing on original sources of Islam, Maulana has devised a pacifist ideology of Islam for world peace. He believes that it can be achieved through individual reform by making man spiritually conscious of his status. Towards this end he established a CPS in 2001 at Delhi which undertakes various spiritual and missionary Dawah activities at international level. He denounces the political interpretation of Islam that has, according to him, defamed Islam and has proved futile, counterproductive and rather a mirage for beleaguered Muslims all over the world.<sup>40</sup>

The modern world at present is having all material strength and facilities of life but lacking in the most essential one ‘an ideology for life’ that according to Maulana can be provided by Islam only. Thus need of the hour is making whole mankind aware of the Creation Plan of God; that is, the present world is temporary and a testing ground for man with a limited lifespan whereas the life in the hereafter would be everlasting. That will be an ideal world (*Jannah*) for those who complete the test of this life successfully but a failure to envisage beyond present with an ‘eat drink and be merry’ attitude is sure to land him in an abode of perpetual suffering (The Hellfire).

It is our firm belief that Islam offers guidance at all times and in all situations. Therefore, it must certainly offer us clear guidance on the present state of affairs.

The first guiding principle can be drawn from the famous *Hudaibyah* treaty in the early phase of Islam. This meant a creating an atmosphere conducive to peaceful Dawah work .This peace

treaty changed the area of encounter between Islam and its rivals from battlefield to the Dawah field.<sup>41</sup>

The Power of Dawah: The Mongols , barbarous and bloody in the methods of warfare and invincible as they looked devastated the mighty Muslim empire at Baghdad in 1258 CE. But then, miraculously Dawah power of Islam emerged and the Mongols were conquered. They had all worldly powers but no ideology, which was provided by Islam through peaceful Dawah work at their domestic levels. Referring to this event P.K. Hitti the well known historian remarks, in his famous book , ‘The History of The Arabs’:

“The religion of the Muslims had conquered where their arms had failed”.<sup>42</sup>

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan recommends a Japanese model of development for Muslim nations. In 1945 America dethroned Japanese from its political pinnacle but they didn’t complain, protest or take to arms. Rather they shifted their focus to technology and soon with a little wise planning became world leaders in that field. The Muslims after a long spell of rule for over 100 years lost their political empire; which they are trying all over the world to regain through armed struggle, in the name of Islamic jihad. According to Maulana if they are not averse to modern education and plan wisely they have a fairly good chance of building a ‘Dawah empire’; as the contemporary world is looking for a viable ideology which only Islam can provide.

### **Inter-religious dialogue**

One of the ironies of this era is that although the means of communication have greatly advanced, people still have difficulty in a meaningful communication and dialogue with other cultures and religions. There is a lot of misinformation and misunderstanding of the Islamic faith. It is essential that Muslims be judged in the light of Islamic ideals: Islam should not be judged in the light of what Muslims do in the name of Islam.<sup>43</sup>

Religious differences have always existed between people. That is why the history of dialogue is also as old as that of mankind. Drawing lessons from the life of Prophet of Islam (PBUH) we come across the events of *Hudaibyah* and the *Mithaq-i-Madinah* or the first written constitution of the world. This was the first religious conference involving Jews, Christians and Muslims; in

modern terms a trialogue, to exchange views on religious issues. It had a divine sanction in the form two principles described in the holy Quran.

i) Finding a common ground

“Say O People of book, Let us come to a word common to us and you that we will worship none but God”<sup>44</sup>

While referring to above Maulana infers that subjects of common interests are in abundance in modern secular fields for creation of peaceful and congenial atmosphere of mutual understanding and to engage others in dialogue. It also ensues from this that even if we have nothing in common with a group still we can live peacefully by lesson of tolerance vide infra.

ii) Pragmatism or religious tolerance

“To you your religion and to me mine”<sup>45</sup>

### **Some Lessons from prophets life**

It is a well known fact that the prophet of Islam (PBUH) was a supremely successful man in the entire human history.<sup>46</sup> But he was not just a hero as Thomas Carlyle has called him. According to the Quran, he was a good example for all mankind. *Uswah Hassna*.<sup>47</sup> He has shown us the way of achieving supreme success in this world. By studying the life of the prophet we can derive those principles which were followed by the prophet.<sup>48</sup>

- i) To begin from possible Aisha (RA) “whenever the Prophet (PBUH) had to choose between two options, he always opted for the easier choice.”<sup>49</sup>
- ii) See advantage in disadvantage (with every hardship there is ease).<sup>50</sup>
- iii) To change the place of action as exemplified in Hijrah
- iv) Make a friend out of foe (return good for evil) “you will see your direst enemy has become your closest friend.”<sup>51</sup>
- v) Turn minus into plus. Seventy unbelievers taken prisoners after Badr were asked to teach 10 Muslim children each as a ransom for their release.
- vi) Power of peace is stronger than power of violence. After conquest of Makkah no revenge was taken by the Prophet (PBUH).
- vii) Not to be dichotomous thinker.

- viii) Bring battle in one's favorite field as exemplified in Hudaibya which changed meeting place from battlefield to dialogue
- ix) Gradual not abrupt implementation of Shariah laws as was implemented in Madina after many years of Quranic ayah on Jannat and Jahannum
- x) Be pragmatic in controversial matters. It is greatest wisdom to be content with pragmatic goals when the ideal goal is not achievable, e. g. omitting word prophet in *Hudaibya*.<sup>52</sup>

## Conclusions

Islam is a monotheistic religion and according to the Quran all people are children of Adam. Satan is considered the enemy of humanity, causing enmity among all people. The series of prophets and messengers coming from God throughout the ages is to call the people again towards their innate identity of love and friendship. The good life according to Islam is in submitting to God and in worshiping Him as The Creator and The Master and to recognize the innate nature of man. The individual who will recognize his true nature on which every person is created will be able to live together in society with peace and affection to each other. In his Last Sermon, the Prophet Muhammad admonished believers:

- "Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you."
- "None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."
- "The most righteous of men is the one who is glad that men should have what is pleasing to him, and who dislikes for them what is for him disagreeable."

In Quran (2:256), God said "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error..." There are many other verses in the Quran that deals with the nature of spreading God's message. One of these is Verse 10:99 "If it had been thy Lord's Will, they would all have believed, all who are on earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe?"

The peace spirituality and Dawah are the values that occupy a place very close to the heart of Maulana. These in fact form the very core of his religious philosophy. Peace according to Maulana is the essential law of nature encompassing the whole known universe and is imbedded in the very nature of man. According to Maulana education is the panacea of all ailments of

Ummah and he thus exhorts Muslims to reorient their energies from battle fields to education, science, technology, welfare activities and Islamic Dawah. Maulana writes:

“The need of the hour is, therefore, the adoption of Dawah work as our most important programme and the diversion of all our strength and resources towards this end.”

## Notes and References:

<sup>1</sup> Al-Quran, 42:13.

<sup>2</sup> Hisham Soliman ‘Toward an Islamic Concept of Peace’ in “The Potential for Peacebuilding in Islam”Volume 2. Issue 2, Spring 2009

<sup>3</sup> Al-Quran, 5:16

<sup>4</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *The True jihad*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2012, pp. 30-31

<sup>5</sup> ( Bukharî, Manaqib, 25, Ikrah, 1; Abu Dawud, Jihad, 97; Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, V, 110-111.

<sup>6</sup> Albert B. Randall, *Theologies of War and Peace among Jews, Christians, and Muslims*, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998, p. 292.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Quran, 10:25

<sup>8</sup> Al-Quran, 2:224

<sup>9</sup> Al-Quran, 7:56

<sup>10</sup> Al-Quran, 7:50

<sup>11</sup> Al-Quran 5:32

<sup>12</sup> Muslim:2593

<sup>13</sup> Al-Tirmidhi

<sup>14</sup> Al-Tirmidhi

<sup>15</sup> Muslim, 101,102.

<sup>16</sup> Bukharî, Iman, 3, 5; Muslim, Iman, 64, 65; Nasâî, Iman, 8, 104, 105.

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Farida Khanam, “A Study of World’s Major Religions” Goodword Books, New Delhi. 2014, pp. 236-237.

<sup>18</sup> Joshua Parens, *An Islamic Philosophy of Virtuous Religions: Introducing Alfarabi* , Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006, pp. 64-65.

<sup>19</sup> Al-Quran, 22:39-40

<sup>20</sup> Al-Quran, 4:75

<sup>21</sup> Al-Quran, 2:190

<sup>22</sup> Al-Quran, 8:60

<sup>23</sup> Sunan Ibn Majah, 2618

<sup>24</sup> The Digest of the Holy Quran. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Kitab Bhawan, New Delhi, p.276

<sup>25</sup> Al-Quran, 8:61

<sup>26</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *The Age of Peace*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2015, p-162.

<sup>27</sup> Al-Quran, 2:191

<sup>28</sup> Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi, *Peace and Jihad in Islam*, Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project 1995-2017

<sup>29</sup> Yoginder Sikand, *Analysis of the writings of Wahiduddin khan-I*,The Milli Gazette,vol-3, No-5

<sup>30</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *The Age of Peace*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2015,p. 7

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-13

<sup>32</sup> Maulana Wahiduddin khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2010, p. 115

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., pp. 94-95

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p. 155

<sup>35</sup> Al-Quran, 22:40

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- <sup>36</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *The True jihad*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2012, pp. 29-30
- <sup>37</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *Islam and Peace*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2008, p. 122
- <sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 122-126
- <sup>39</sup> Al Qur'an, 41:53
- <sup>40</sup> Jamal Sanad Al-Suwaidi, *The Mirage*, UAE, 2015, p. 131
- <sup>41</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *Islam and Peace*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2008, pp. 118-119
- <sup>42</sup> P. K Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, Adam Publishers, New Delhi, p. 448.
- <sup>43</sup> Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Creation plan of God*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2001, p. 21
- <sup>44</sup> Al-Quran, 3:64
- <sup>45</sup> Al-Quran, 109:6
- <sup>46</sup> Michael Hart, *The 100*.
- <sup>47</sup> Al-Quran, 33:21
- <sup>48</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *Islam and Peace*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2008, p. 69
- <sup>49</sup> Al-Bukhari
- <sup>50</sup> Al-Quran, 94:5-6
- <sup>51</sup> Al-Quran, 41:34
- <sup>52</sup> Maulana Wahiddudin Khan, *The Age of Peace*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2015, p. 67